

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 011663

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FOR AMBASSADOR FROM NEA/ARN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SY, US

SUBJECT: SYRIAN JEWRY

REF: DAMASCUS 280

1. HOWELL PASSED REPORT RE UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO
OBTAIN PERMISSION FOR PARENTS TO ATTEND WEDDINGS IN
NEW YORK TO SHALOM JANUARY 16. SHALOM SAID FIRST WEDDING
HAD TAKEN PLACE JANUARY 15. HE ADDED THAT, IN ADDITION
TO SECOND WEDDING ALREADY SCHEDULED, HE EXPECTED ANNOUNCE-
MENT OF TWO ADDITIONAL ENGAGEMENTS BEFORE END OF THE MONTH.

2. SHALOM REPORTED THAT DR. BALASS ARRIVED NEW YORK
JANUARY 12 AND HAD ALREADY MADE GREAT IMPRESSION ON U.S.
COMMUNITY. BECAUSE OF DELAY IN HIS ARRIVAL AND OTHER
CONSIDERATIONS, SHALOM SAID ARRANGEMENT HAD BEEN MADE FOR
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LONG ISLAND JEWISH HOSPITAL (WHICH HE SAID WAS SUPERIOR
INSTITUTION) TO TAKE BALASS, WITH COMMUNITY FOOTING SALARY
COSTS UNTIL JULY 1, WHEN HOSPITAL WILL HAVE FUNDS. BALASS
IS REPORTEDLY PLEASED WITH ARRANGEMENT BUT, DUE TO CHANGES
IN U.S. LAWS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 1978, WILL NOT BE ABLE
TO PRACTICE WITH PRESENT "J" VISA. BALASS IS NOW IN TOUCH
WITH HIAS LAWYERS IN EFFORT TO WORK OUT SOLUTION TO THIS

DIFFICULTY.

3. IN REPLY TO HOWELL'S QUERY, SHALOM SAID HE HOPES TO HAVE ADDITIONAL MARRIAGE PETITIONS TO US SOON. HE SAID PART OF DELAY WAS RESULT OF CHABOT'S INCAPACITY WITH PNEUMONIA, BUT HE (SHALOM) ALSO TAKING MORE TIME WITH NEXT TRANCHE TO LOCATE HOMES INTO WHICH WOMEN COULD BE ACCEPTED TO EASE THEIR TRANSITION TO LIFE IN THE U.S. SHALOM EXPRESSED SATISFACTION, WHICH HE SAID BALASS SHARED, AT THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE GROUP THAT ARRIVED IN AUGUST. HE SAID ALL HAD FINISHED SCHOOLING, HAD JOBS AND WERE INCREASINGLY AT EASE AND CONFIDENT. CHRISTOPHER

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